

Message Text

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41

ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 NEA-06 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-03 H-01

INR-05 L-01 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 RSC-01 PRS-01 SP-02

SS-15 USIA-06 AID-05 DRC-01 EB-04 FEAE-00 INT-05 OC-01

CCO-00 /076 W

----- 022859

R 171130Z OCT 74

FM AMEMBASSY VALLETTA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 5822

INFO AMEMBASSY ABU DHABI

AMEMBASSY ATHENS

AMEMBASSY CAIRO

AMEMBASSY KUWAIT

AMEMBASSY MANAMA

AMEMBASSY MUSCAT

AMEMBASSY ROME

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE VALLETTA 1649

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PFOR, MT, EG, IT, MU, QA

SUBJ: MINTOFF VISIT TO MIDDLE EAST

MUSCAT PASS DOHA

REF: VALLETTA 1631 (NOTAL), 1595 (NOTAL)

1. PRIME MINISTER MINTOFF REPORTED TO PARLIAMENT OCTOBER 16 CONCERNING HIS OCTOBER 4-10 TRIP TO THE MIDDLE EAST. MINTOFF'S STATEMENT CONSISTED LARGELY OF GENERALITIES ABOUT STRENGTHENING COOPERATION BETWEEN MALTA AND THE INDIVIDUAL COUNTRIES HE VISITED (EGYPT, OMAN, AND QATAR). HE ANNOUNCED THAT DELEGATIONS FROM OMAN AND QATAR WOULD PAY RETURN VISITS TO MALTA IN THE NEAR FUTURE TO PURSUE THE ESTABLISHMENT OF "FRIENDLY RELATIONS."

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2. MINTOFF ALSO STATED THAT HE STOPPED IN ROME IN ROUTE TO

THE MIDDLE EAST TO DISCUSS WITH ITALIAN OFFICIALS MALTA'S PROBLEMS WITH THE EUROPEAN COMMUNITIES, THE WORK OF THE CONFERENCE ON SECURITY AND COOPERATION IN EUROPE, AND A GOM-GOI TELECOMMUNICATIONS AGREEMENT.

3. COMMENT: MINTOFF GAVE ABSOLUTELY NO INDICATION WHETHER HE RAISED WITH HIS HOSTS THE SUBJECT UPPERMOST IN THE MINDS OF MANY MALTESE; THE EXTREMELY HIGH PRICE OF GASOLINE IN MALTA. THERE WAS CONSIDERABLE SPECULATION HERE WHILE MINTOFF WAS AWAY THAT THE MAIN PURPOSE OF HIS TRIP WAS TO OBTAIN GUARANTEED SUPPLIES OF PETROLEUM FOR 1975 AT CHEAPER RATES THAN GOM HAS BEEN PAYING LIBYA DURING 1974. MINTOFF CONTINUES TO CLOAK THE QUESTION OF PETROLEUM SUPPLIES AND PRICES WITH A GREAT DEAL OF MYSTERY, TO THE ANNOYANCE OF MOST MALTESE REGARDLESS OF THEIR POLITICAL VIEWPOINT. TEXT OF MINTOFF STATEMENT TO PARLIAMENT FOLLOWS VIA UNCLASSIFIED SEPTEL.SMITH

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